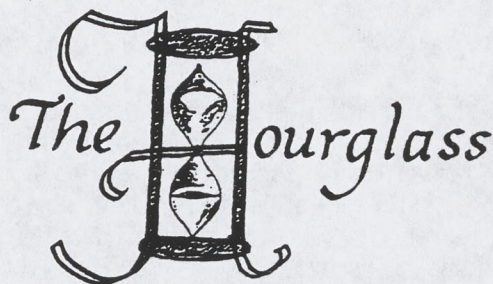


Historical Society of Palm Desert

P.O. Box 77

Palm Desert, CA 92260

(619) 346-6588



Community

Service

Collections

Archives

FALL/WINTER 1996

VOL. 4, NO. 3

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Shadow Mountain Conference Center October 24, 1996

President Jean Hollenbeck opened the meeting with a moment of silence in memory of **Bob Keedy**. Bob's death on June 14 came as a shock to all of us in the community. He had just been re-elected to a second term as president of the Historical Society. He is certainly missed..... and closing ranks has been a challenge.

Ed Mullins, past president, gave a very positive report on changes at the old Fire Station. He expressed gratitude to the City and to volunteers at the Society, calling the improvements "tremendous" and "wonderful." (See item on page 3)

Barbara Callahan spoke about the Mini-Muster. She and husband, Dan, co-chairs of the program and Jan Holmlund, consultant, received certificates for directing the 4th year of this successful fire safety program for valley children.

Dan Callahan, past president, installed officers for 2-year terms: Jean Hollenbeck to fill the vacancy of president and Gary Olesen, newly appointed vice-president. Also installed to the Board of Directors was Mary Safe and Gene Roberts for 4-year terms.

Doloris Driskel has been appointed Executive Director to act as liaison from the Society to group/club functions, City meetings, etc. Her community service with Parks & Recreation, Golf Cart Parade Committee, etc. has made her well-known in Palm Desert. We trust Doloris to elevate the Society's profile in all the right places.

History of the Fire Department by Bill Lord

Bill came to Palm Desert in 1948 and served as fire chief. The community's first fire fighting operation occupied a place in the area of President's Plaza parking lot. Cliff Henderson purchased the site on El Paseo and donated it for the erection of a fire station. The cost of construction was \$7,000 with bricks made at the prison for cost of materials and most of the labor done by Forestry employees. The structure stood by itself in the desert terrain, the only other obvious commercial building being the Firecliff Lodge. During the first year a flood cascaded down the mountain, in through the back door and out the front door. A siren was mounted at Mullins Pharmacy and tuning forks operated through radios alerted volunteer fire fighters, one of whom was Bob Keedy. The fire engine carried only 500 gallons and when that was gone, swimming pools were another source of water. In 1950 a fund-raiser was held at Shadow Mountain Club with the featured entertainment being a fireworks display. The first rocket sent up came straight down into the stockpile.....and the party ended with a BANG!!

We thank Bill Lord for an interesting and humorous presentation. That's what the Society is all about.....getting in touch with by-gone days.....and rejoicing in how far we have come. Marian Henderson brought smiles with her shared memories. Charter members Marty & Willa McKell and Charlie & Joyce White were among many faithful supporters in attendance. Florence Maxwell has been sidelined for a few weeks.....our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

"GOOD MEETING -- GOOD PROGRAM -- GOOD GATHERING" was the consensus. President Hollenbeck played the video 'From Dream to Reality' at the close of the session.



Mini-Muster official photographer Roger Keezer snapped Dan and Bj making rounds of events at George Washington Charter School. Fire fighter James Brably is in the background conducting a discussion with a student group on fire protection techniques.

City Honors Mini-Muster

At City Hall on the evening of October 24, 1996 the mayor and council members of the City of Palm Desert presented proclamations to the following Mini-Muster co-sponsors: Historical Society of Palm Desert, the Eastern Division of Riverside County Fire Department, California Department of Forestry, Fire Station #33-Town Center Way and the Desert Sands Unified School District. Councilman Dick Kelly made the presentations.

The Society is pleased that our deserving co-sponsors were honored. We appreciate the support given by Desert Sands Unified School District in adopting and implementing the program in our cove community schools. Our fire fighters have our gratitude for their efforts and contributions through construction of field sets, participation in volunteer field days, souvenir fire safety gifts given to the children, and over-all organizational skills and natural ability to work with children.

The Historical Society's proclamation reads in part.....

Whereas, the people of this community recognize the leadership of the Historical Society in bringing the Mini-Muster program to Palm Desert; in successfully administering the co-sponsorship; in participating in the field days; and in providing the awards for this unique program in fire safety for the protection and training of thousands of third grade children in Palm Desert.....and..... Therefore, I Walter H. Snyder, Mayor of the City of Palm Desert, California, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 7, 1996 as

MINI-MUSTER APPRECIATION DAY

in the City of Palm Desert. Our community is privileged to be the first community in Southern California to present a successful Mini-Muster program.

Walter H. Snyder

Mayor of the City of Palm Desert

After their Mini-Muster experience students drew pictures and wrote thank you letters. Councilman Kelly presented a framed commendation to these students for their art work:

<u>Student</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
Carla Urias	Gerald Ford	Karen Elam & Kathy Hartung
Cody Williams	Abraham Lincoln	Valerie Virtue
Sarianne Zeitounian	George Washington Charter	Nobi Nishikawa

Everything's Up to Date on El Paseo

Transformation of the Old Fire Station was completed over the summer months. Plumbing, patching, painting, paving.....you name it.....the City has provided a brand new look for our headquarters. Society members and supports are delighted and profoundly grateful for the work accomplished. Thanks, also, to city staff and Council members for ongoing budgetary support, which makes it possible to carry forward our mission to collect, preserve and protect the historic record for posterity and to share it with the entire community.

Volunteers have pitched in to improve the interior of the building. Jack Bowie installed computer furniture in the office and located a docent desk in the main exhibit room. Roger Keezer and Bruce Hagerman moved a display case from the bay and arranged an exhibit of historic fire department memorabilia. Thanks, fellows, that's heavy lifting!

Fire Engine #1, which has been inoperable for over two years, is being repaired by Dick Blackstone at a garage in Indio. He promises that it will be in good running order for another forty years -- a true antique and an asset for use at the Society and in community events.

We look forward to a great season and invite your participation.

Welcome New Members

James & Josephine Miller
Donald & Joan Stage
Jack & Lois Boehm
Albert Frank-Guenther Law, Inc.

Deceased Life Members

Mrs. Phillip Boyd
Ann Carpenter

Life Membership Roster

Mr. & Mrs. Edward Benson
Dick & Ginny Folkers
Mrs. Jean Hahn
Robert & Rheo Lawman
Edwin & Theda Lundquist
Ed & Ginny Mullins
Adele Ruge North
Jeannette Yoxsimer

Party at Shadow Mountain Continues the Magic

President Jean Hollenbeck and her husband, Holly, represented the Society at the Shadow Mountain Resort's recent homeowner's party, which welcomes Club members back each Fall. This year's theme was a hark back to the forties and the ground breaking for the Club which took place fifty years ago. Some eighty members and Club personnel were dressed in attire of the '40s and black tie. They danced to the music of Stan Miller's Big Band on the first tennis court built, which bears Clifford Henderson's name. This world class resort now has seventeen courts under the direction of tennis pro, Owen Gillen.

Special guest Marian Henderson, wife of the co-founder of the Club, the late Clifford Henderson, was introduced by Ted Lennon of Lowe Enterprises. She wore an elegant, authentic gown of the forties.....a jacketed, floral print in shades of red, green, brown and yellow. It came, Marian said, "straight from my closet." Mrs. Henderson's presence, an enchanted desert evening and the aura of fun that pervaded the lovely party kindled many happy memories.

Steve Frisbee (General Manager), Cindy (Resident Manager) & Richard Calhoun, Dawn FitzGerald and others of the resort staff were among those deserving thanks for a highly successful event.

Memorial Gifts

Additional Memorial Gifts for Fay Bowie:

Dan & Bj Callahan

Mr. & Mrs. James J. Finch

Dick & Ginny Folkers

In memoriam for Bob Keedy:

From the Keedy Family

*We send our thanks for your
kind expressions of sympathy
at the passing of our father.
Dad touched many lives in so
many ways. It is comforting to
know he will be remembered.*

Barbara and Doug

Beverly J. Riley
Edwin & Theda Lundquist
Dick & Ginny Folkers
Mrs. Kay H. Olesen
G. M. Arnold
Celia Z. Dunn
Doloris M. Driskel
Gary Olesen
Florence L. Maxwell
Ruth E. Hall
J. Burwell & Helene S. Harrison
Jean Ann Hirschi
Robert Hoover
Laurie Gordon
Dorothy "Toby" C. Regorrah
Bj & Dan Callahan
Loraine V. Meyer
Austin Johnson
Jean D. Hollenbeck
Hildred P. Armitage
Corrine G. Kellejian
Cory Bader Wanamaker
Rheo H. Lawman
Edward D. Mullins
Jan Holmlund
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene L. Starcher
Russell A. & Irma Marshall
Inez Garrow

Visit from a Pioneer

On Memorial Day 1996, Evonne Riddell, pioneer and forty-year resident of Palm Desert, returned to the desert from her retirement home in Lake Tahoe. She came back to celebrate a double memorial -- for her daughter and for an old friend.

In the late forties Evonne was circulation manager at Desert Magazine, a publication owned by her father, Randall Henderson. Randall was one of the Henderson brothers whose lives entwined with the early history of Palm Desert as told in the book Desert Editor by J. Wilson McKenney (published in 1972.)

The publishing and printing business was located in the pueblo-style building at 74225 Highway 111. It also housed a fine arts gallery, an exhibit of native crafts and a book store, which Evonne operated.

When the College of the Desert opened, Evonne became the first book store manager. At C.O.D. she met English professor Edgar DeForest in 1962. During their twenty years at the college, they and their families became close friends.

Evonne's daughter Jeanne attended San Diego State and earned a Ph.D. in psychology at the University of New Hampshire. Highly respected by her students and faculty colleagues, Jeanne taught at Grossmont College for twenty years. She also spent time teaching American students in Germany for the Department of Defense.

Three years ago Jeanne was diagnosed with cancer. Aggressive treatment failed and she lost her battle for life. Ten days before her death Jeanne arranged a grand party to treat twenty of her friends to rides in hot air balloons.

This past Memorial Day, Evonne and Edgar met once more. Evonne lit a candle and placed a photo of Jeanne on the table next to one of Mary DeForest, Edgar's wife. She also had died of cancer two years before. The two friends sat in the flickering light of the moment, comforted by each other's presence, remembering their departed loved ones.

(Barbara Keedy Eastes helped with this story. Barbara was at the balloon party which celebrated Jeanne's life.)

Donations

Mrs. Howard (June) Peever
daughter of Frances Bomhard

John A. Hill
Hill's Home Service, 564-4964
Lowe Enterprise Commercial Group

Mrs. Eric (Annette) Le Fourneau
Grass Valley, CA.
daughter of Florence Maxwell

Photos by Evelanne Heyman & publications
saved by June's mother, a Desert Rat
Scrapbook among them.

Washed all windows at the Society, both
inside and out. A BIG thank-you!
14 colored photos, Desert Crossing
Shopping Center, (1) 8x12 & (13) 8x10
1 miniature golf scorecard from Shadow
Mountain Club, used by Annette for a game.

Perhaps there are others who can clear out "things" that the Society would be proud to have in our archives. Memo to members -- please search.

Historical Society of Palm Desert
P. O. Box 77
Palm Desert, CA 92261

Fall comes to the desert with the Golf Cart Parade....."That's Entertainment" for sure!

The Children's Literature Festival honoring Pat Anderson will be December 1 at the Rose Garden area of the Civic Center Park. Those of you with children or grandchildren, it is a delightful day for them. Be sure to mark your calendars.

And.....come see us before the holidays. Office hours are: Monday/Tuesday/Thursday from 10:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m.

Next Hourglass will come to you early in 1997.

Hourglass Editor,
Theda Lundquist